AUM

I am the cause; I am the production and dissolution of the whole of nature. There is no superior to me, O conqueror of wealth! On me is all the Universe suspended as the bead-gems on a necklace.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

Should one fly even after furnishing oneself with thousands upon thousands of wings, and even though one should have the velocity of thought, one would never reach the end of the Great Cause.—*Sanat-sujatiya, Ch. VI.*

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THE BHAGAVAD-GITA.

(*Continued from January number.*)

SECOND CHAPTER.

"And now, under the Lotus in the Heart, glows the lamp of the Soul. Protected by the gods who there stand guard, it sheds its soft rays in every direction."

A mighty spirit moves through the pages of the Bhagavad-Gita. It has the seductive influence of beauty; yet, like strength, it fills one as with the sound of armies assembling or the roar of great waters; appealing alike to the warrior and the philosopher, it shows to the one the righteousness of lawful action, and to the other the calmness which results to him who has reached inaction through action. Schlegel, after studying the poem, pays tribute to it in these words: "By the Brahmins, reverence of masters is considered the most sacred of duties. Thee therefore, first, most holy prophet,

interpreter of the Deity, by whatever name thou wast called among mortals, the author of this poem, by whose oracles the mind is rapt with ineffable delight to doctrines lofty, eternal, and divine—thee first, I say, I hail, and shall always worship at thy feet."

The second chapter begins to teach philosophy, but in such a way that Arjuna is led on gradually step by step to the end of the dialogue; and yet the very first instructions from Krishna are so couched that the end and purpose of the scheme are seen at the beginning.

Although philosophy seems dry to most people, and especially to minds in the Western world who are surrounded by the rush of their new and quite undeveloped civilization, yet it must be taught and understood. It has become the fashion to some extent even in the Theosophical Society to scout careful study or practice and go in for the rapid methods inaugurated in America. In many places emotional goodness is declared to exceed in value the calmness that results from a broad philosophical foundation, and in others astral wonder seeking, or great strength of mind whether discriminative or not, is given the first rank. Strength without knowledge, and sympathetic tears without the ability to be calm,—in fine, faith without works—will not save us. And this is one of the lessons of the second chapter.

The greatest of the Ancients inculcated by both symbols and books the absolute necessity for the acquirement of philosophical knowledge, inasmuch as strength or special faculties are useless without it. Those Greeks and others who recorded some of the wisdom of the elder Egyptians well illustrated this. They said, "that in the symbols it was shown, as where Hermes is represented as an old and a young man, intending by this to signify that he who rightly inspects sacred matters ought to be both intelligent and strong, one of these without the other being imperfect. And for the same reason the symbol of the great Sphynx was established; the beast signifying strength, and the man wisdom. For strength when destitute of the ruling aid of wisdom, is overcome by stupid astonishment confusing all things together; and for the purpose of action the intellect is useless when it is deprived of strength." So, whether our strength is that of sympathy or of astral vision, we will be confounded if philosophical knowledge be absent.

But, so as not to be misunderstood, I must answer the question that will be asked, "Do you then condemn sympathy and love, and preach a cold philosophy only?" By no means. Sympathy and emotion are as much parts of the great whole as knowledge, but inquiring students wish to know all that lies in the path. The office of sympathy, charity, and all other forms of goodness, so far as the effect on us is concerned, is to entitle us to help. By this exercise we inevitably attract to us those souls who have the

knowledge and are ready to help us to acquire it also. But while we ignore philosophy and do not try to attain to right discrimination, we must pass through many lives, many weary treadmills of life, until at last little by little we have been forced, without our will, into the possession of the proper seeds of mental action from which the crop of right discrimination may be gathered.

Arjuna asks Krishna:

"As I am of a disposition which is affected by compassion and the fear of doing wrong, my mind is bewildered. Tell me truly what may be best for me to do! I am thy disciple, wherefore instruct me in my duty, who am under thy tuition; for my understanding is confounded by the dictates of my duty, and I see nothing that may assuage the grief which drieth up my faculties, although I were to obtain a kingdom without a rival upon earth or dominion over the hosts of heaven."

Krishna, now the Guru—or spiritual teacher—of Arjuna, makes a reply which is not excelled anywhere in the poem; pointing out the permanence and eternal nature of the soul, the progress it has to make through reincarnation to perfection, the error of imagining that we really do anything ourselves, and showing how all duties must be performed by him who desires to reach salvation. The words used by the Blessed Lord in speaking of the soul cannot be added to by me. He says:

"The wise grieve not for dead or living. But never at any period did I, or thou, or these Kings of men, not exist, nor shall any of us at any time henceforward cease to exist. As the soul in the body undergoes the changes of childhood, prime, and age, so it obtains a new body hereafter; a sensible man is not troubled about that. But the contact of the elements, O son of Kunti! which bring cold and heat, pleasure and pain, which come and go and are temporary, these do thou endure, O Bharata![1] For that man whom, being the same in pain and pleasure and ever constant, these elements do not afflict, is fitted for immortality. There is no existence for what does not exist, nor is there any non-existence for what exists. * * * Know this, that that by which all this universe is created is indestructible. No one can cause the destruction of this inexhaustible thing * * He who believes that this spirit can kill, and he who thinks it can be killed, both of these are wrong in judgment. It is not born, nor dies at any time; it has no origin, nor will it ever have an origin. Unborn, changeless, eternal both as to future and past time, it is not slain when the body is killed. How can that man, O Son of Prithá! who knows that it is indestructible, constant, unborn, and inexhaustible, really cause the death of anybody or kill anybody himself? As a man abandons worn-out clothes and takes other new ones, so does the soul quit worn-out bodies and enter other new ones. Weapons cannot cleave it. Fire cannot burn it, nor can water wet it, nor wind dry it. It is constant, capable of going everywhere, firm, immovable, and eternal. It is said to be invisible, incomprehensible, immutable. Therefore, knowing it to be such, thou art not right to grieve for it."

1 In this verse—the 14th—Krishna calls Arjuna by two names; first—as son of Kunti (his mother), and second—as Bharata (descendant of the mighty Bharata). He is reminded of his earthly origin in the beginning when reference is made to the elements that produce bodily sensations; and at the end, when adjured to endure these changes, his attention is directed to a great and powerful, spiritual, paternal ancestor. All of this is significant.—B.

This is the same doctrine as is found in the Isavasaya-Upanishad :— *The Identity of all Spiritual Beings*, and *Resignation*. And by "Spiritual Beings" is meant all life above the inorganic, for Man is not admitted to be material. There is only one life, one consciousness. It masquerades under all the different forms of sentient beings, and those varying forms with their intelligences mirror a portion of the *One Life*, thus producing in each a false idea of egoism. A continuance of belief in that false ego produces a continuance of ignorance, thus delaying salvation. The beginning of the effort to dissipate this false belief is the beginning of *the Path*; the total dissipation of it is the perfection of Yoga, or union with God. The entry upon that Path *cannot be made until resignation is consummated*; for, as the Upanishad and the Bagavad-Gita say:

"All this; whatsoever moves on earth, is to be surrendered to the Lord—the Self. When thou hast surrendered all this; then thou mayest enjoy."

If this be true, then how necessary to consider philosophy so as to be able to cut off the false belief? And how useless to pursue occultism merely for your own benefit? You may know all about currents and polarities, about any and every phenomenon possible in the astral world, but with the death of your body it is lost, leaving to you only the amount of real Spiritual advance you happen to have made. But once resign and all is possible. This will not ruin your life nor destroy any proper ideals; poor and petty ideals had better be at once lost. It may seem that all ideals are gone, but that will be only the first effect of taking this step.

We must be ready to say at any moment under whatever circumstances, whether expected or unexpected: "It is just what I in fact desired." For only those ideals can be dissipated which rest upon a lower basis than the highest aim, or which are not in accord with Nature's (God's) law. And as our aim ought to be to reach the supreme condition and to help all other sentient beings to do so also, we must cultivate complete resignation to the Law, the expression and operation of which is seen in the circumstances of life and the ebb and flow of our inner being. All that can be gotten out of wealth, or beauty, or art, or pleasure, are merely pools of water found along our path as it wanders through the desert of life. If we are not seeking them their appearance gives us intense pleasure, and we are thus able to use them for our good and that of others just so long as the Law leaves them to us; but when that superior power removes them, we must say: "It is just what I in fact desired." Any other course is blindness. All the passing shows of life, whether fraught with disaster or full of fame and glory, are teachers; he who neglects them, neglects opportunities which seldom the gods repeat. And the only way to learn from them is through the heart's resignation; for when we become in heart completely poor, we at once are the treasurers and disbursers of enormous riches.

Krishna then insists on the scrupulous performance of natural duty.[1]

And considering thine own duty as a Kshatriya, thou art not right to waver. For there is nothing better for a Kshatriya than lawful war."[2]

In order to see more clearly the occasion for his insistance upon performance of duty, we must remember that at the opening of the battle Arjuna "threw down his bow and arrows." This, in India, meant that he then resolved to desert the circumstances in which Karma had placed him and *to become an ascetic*, or, as has been frequently proposed by Western students, he wished to get away from a state of Society which offered apparent obstruction to spiritual culture. But Krishna refers him to his birth in the Kshatriya—or Warrior—caste, and to the natural duty of a Kshatriya, which is war. The natural caste of Arjuna might have been represented as that of Merchant, but wisely it was not, for this is the book of action, and only a warrior fitly typifies action;[3] so his natural duty will stand for whatever be that of any man. We are not to shirk our Karma; by abhorring it we only make new Karma. Our only true course is to "let the motive for action be in the action itself, never in its reward; not to be incited to action by the hope of the result, nor yet indulge a propensity to inertness."[4] This advice and the direction[5] to see the one Spirit in all things and all things in *It* express the gist of the Bhagavad-Gita's teaching as to the proper attitude to be assumed by those striving after salvation.

In verse 40 Krishna alludes to this system as being one of initiation:

"In this no initiation is lost, nor are there any evil consequences, and even a little of this practice saves from great danger; there is no destruction of nor detriment to one's efforts."

Although not proclaimed in the newspapers nor advertised here and there through Secretaries, Delegates, and "Doors," this is the mother and the head of all systems of initiation. It is the progenitor of the mystic Rosicrucians, who have adopted the *lotus* and changed it into a *rose*,[6] and all the other hundreds of initiating occult societies are merely faint and in-

1 Some students, as well as critics, have said that theosophy teaches a running away from family and from the world, and that neither knowledge nor salvation can be gained without a ridiculous asceticism which would upset the natural order. This is wrong. And when it is believed to be a fact—now asserted by me in confidence of support from all real theosophists—that the Blessed Masters who ordered the founding of our Society constantly read and inculcate the Bhagavad-Gita's philosophy, we perceive that such assertions against the Society's aims are incorrect.—B.

2 Verse 31.

3 My opinion is that the Kshatriya caste is the greatest. The Brahmans, it is true, have always had more veneration paid them as being spiritual teachers and thus representing the *head* of Brahma; but in some of the Aryan sacrifices there is an occasion when the Kshatriya ranks the Brahman. The latter are more the conservators of true Doctrine; but when the time comes for the "gods to descend in order to establish a new harmony on earth," they always begin with a warrior, Osiris who educated and solidified the Egyptians was a warrior, and the mysterious Melchisedek, who blessed Abraham, was Prophet, Priest, and King, that is—warrior. Then, too, the warrior caste could learn and speak the Vedas as well as engage in war, whereas the Brahman's only duty was that of a teacher and not fighter. The Kshatriya therefore stands in the position of mediator between the action of the body of Brahma and the calm inaction of Brahma's head.—B.

4 Verse 47. 5 Chapter 13.

6 The probability is, that the Rosicrucian "rose" was altered from the *lotus* because the latter flower was not understood in Europe, whereas the rose was; and the rose is the nearest to the lotus, taken all in all. In Japan the *lotus in the heart* is adhered to; they say that by directing attention to the heart, it is found to burst open into a lotus of eight petals, in each of which resides one power, while in the centre sits the lord of all.—B.

complete copies of this real one; but, unlike those, *it* has never dissolved. It is secret, because, founded in nature and having only real Hierophants at the head, its privacy cannot be invaded without the real key. And that key, in each degree, is the *aspirant himself*. Until that aspirant has become in fact the sign and the key, he cannot enter the degree above him. As a whole then, and in each degree, it is self-protective.

Thus including all other systems, it is the most difficult of all; but as at some time, in this life or in a succeeding age, we must perforce enter this *Lodge*, the attempt at entry might as well be made at once. Of this we will speak in our next. WILLIAM BREHON.

(*To be continued.*)

THE SEERESS OF PREVORST.

Through the kindness of Dr. Hubbe-Schleiden, the editor of *The Sphynx*, the excellent German magazine devoted to occult and psychical subjects, THE PATH is enabled to reproduce from that publication the beautiful drawing of the Seeress of Prevorst by Gabriel Max, the eminent German painter. This picture was given, with various other admirable illustrations, in connection with an article written by Baron du Prel in commemoration of the hundreth anniversary of the birth of Justinius Kerner, the biographer of the Seeress. This portrait is an ideal conception of the artist's, a "Fantasie-Bild," there having been only a silhouette profile-likeness extant, but as Gabriel Max is a painter of exceptional spiritual power, it seems not at all unlikely that he should, though unconsciously, have perceived the true likeness psychically. It corresponds very closely with the description of the Seeress given by Dr. Kerner, particularly in the penetrating and soulfully luminous eyes.

The very careful account written by Dr. Kerner made the Seeress of Prevorst one of the most famous of somnambulists, or sensitives, and Kerner's book, with its evidence, supported as it is by a mass of corroborative testimony from unimpeachable sources, is a veritable mine of information for all engaged in psychical research. It seems remarkable that more attention has not been given to it by the scientific investigators, for, however much it may have been scouted in the earlier days of this century by the chronic skeptics, it turns out that many of the phenomena described with such minutiae by Dr. Kerner tally exactly with those detailed in the accounts of the experiments made by Dr. Charcot and his staff at the Salpetriere in Paris, which are now accepted without question by the scientists. Therefore a great proportion of those phenomena being verified by subsequent experience, it is justifiable to assume the same correctness for the entire narrative. Indeed, so high

was the character of Dr. Kerner both as a physician and a poet that none of his contemporaries ventured to impeach his integrity, but the skeptics contented themselves with asserting that he must have been imposed upon; their reasons given for so believing being, as usual in such cases, of so slender a character that, if raised as objections in any department of physical science, they would make the person using such argument ridiculous among his contemporaries.

Friederika Hauffe was born in the little mountain village of Prevorst, in the midst of the Black Forest, in the year 1801. Psychical sensitiveness, as is apt to be the case in such instances, was hereditary in her family, and some interesting incidents are told concerning her grandfather's experiences. As a child she had various remarkable happenings in the way of dreams and visions, but her nature was not a morbid one; she seem to have her full share of the lightness and gaiety of girlhood. As she ripened into womanhood her inner life unfolded more and more, and she was afflicted with an illness which promoted her psychical development, but the injudicious treatment to which she was subjected through the ignorance of her family injured her health irretrievably. All sorts of experiments seem to have been tried with her, including magnetic treatment from various persons, not excepting two or three black magicians, and the mixture of influences from conflicting personalities had a most damaging result, in deranging her nervous system. When at last she was brought to Weinsberg and placed in the skillful hands of Dr. Kerner, recovery was hopeless, and the most that could be done was to ameliorate her sufferings and prolong her life for a few years.

She became a member of Dr. Kerner's household, and that excellent physician thus had exceptional opportunities for the study of her case, which he fully availed himself of, making each day in his notebooks, with German-like thoroughness, minute entries of all occurrences. Like many somnambulistic patients, she often prescribed for herself while in the magnetic sleep. Before she came to Dr. Kerner's these instructions were occasionally heeded with good results, but to her ignorant friends many of the things prescribed seemed nonsensical, and were neglected: had they been heeded the results might have been very different. Among other things detailed directions were given for the construction of a certain curious magnetic machine, and drawings were made by her for the same. No attention was paid to this at the time, but several years afterwards, while she was with Dr. Kerner, the directions were repeated and the drawings were again made with great care: it was said through her that had this machine been made when first directed it would have cured her, but now it was too late to do more than relieve her suffering. The machine was made exactly according to directions, and the predicted result was accomplished. Its principle was that of the generation of a very gentle electric current by the use of certain herbs. To the casual

observer it seemed hardly possible that anything could have been really accomplished by the use of such slight means as a handful of herbs (camomile and St. Johnswort) in connection with a machine of wood, glass, and steel, with woolen cords. It is only recently that science has demonstrated that slight electrical currents are set in motion even by such inconsiderable materials, thereby confirming the assertion made by the Seeress in her magnetic state. She said that the electricity produced by the ordinary machine was too strong and intense to be of benefit; the gentle current generated by these vegetable substances was what was needed. Herein may lie a most valuable hint for medical science; and, indeed, it seems as if it were already tending in this direction. It might be worth while to construct a machine after the pattern given by her;—the designs are published in the German edition of Kerner's work, together with the highly interesting plates giving the wonderful inner language spoken and written by the Seeress, together with the drawings of the "life" and "sun" circles of deeply mystical significance, which alone are worthy of profound study by the earnest seeker.

This machine was called a "Nerve-tuner" (Nervenstimmer), and it seems likely that it might prove very effective in nervous diseases. The history of the Seeress shows that all vegetable and mineral substances have their peculiar occult properties, either beneficial or injurious. Her prescriptions included some things which would probably prove valuable additions to the Materia Medica. St. Johnswort appears to have strikingly sensitive properties, and laurel leaves were particularly effective when used in amulets. Great care was taken to provide that leaves and other substances should be used in certain numbers, according to the purpose intended. In fact, in all her directions, the number seemed to be a most important factor, whether it were the number of things used,the number of applications to be made, or the number of the hour of day, and so on.

All the phenomena, or nearly all, characteristic of occult manifestations, including modern Spiritism, took place with her, and their genuineness is substantiated by the testimony of many and thoroughly trustworthy witnesses. Many of the things related of her remind us of those told concerning Madame Blavatsky, only in the case of the Seeress they seem to have been done involuntarily. She was frequently levitated, articles were carried through the air in her neighborhood and at times brought into the room under circumstauces which made it impossible that they should have appeared otherwise than through the solid walls, and "the astral bells" were also often sounded in her presence, their peculiar musical tones resembling those of a triangle, corresponding to the descriptions given by Mr. Sinnett and other friends of Madame Blavatsky. She also projected her astral body, which was seen in other and distant places, and she told what was going on at a distance under circumstances which gave the strongest proofs of the

accuracy of her vision. Her sensitive nature was much afflicted by *Kama Loca* entities, as we would call them, which came flocking around her, but she did much good by turning their attention away from their earthly attractions towards the Devachanic state.

The various degrees of her magnetic states correspond exactly with those described by Dr. Charcot and his staff to-day, and some interesting parallels might be instituted by thoughtful students of such matters. It is worthy of note that she insists strongly upon the septenary division, which agrees substantially with that given in recent occult teachings, while the various states of superphysical existence correspond closely with those described in Esoteric Buddhism and other modern Theosophical works.

As is apt to be the case in instances similar to hers, her statements concerning the mysteries beyond the physical life, when addressed more immediately to those around her, or brought out by their inquiries, were more or less colored by both her own personal ideas, or theirs, concerning religious or ethical matters, but the vein of truth might nevertheless be discerned running beneath that which was colored by prejudices of persons and localities. But at times her soul rose beyond these influences into more truly spiritual realms, and then great and divine truths seemed to find a profound utterance. It is in this aspect that the true occultist will find the life of the Seeress of Prevorst well worthy of serious study. It seems as if it were necessary that truth should be conveyed to us through an admixture with the unessential, if not the erroneous. As we learn the value of light by the shadows which seem to modify it, we likewise learn to recognize truth by its association with that which it illuminates and which is necessary for the understanding of its lessons. B.

STRAY THOUGHTS.

He who loves the Whole, attracts all the units. He who hates one unit, repels the Whole, for in every unit the Whole is contained. One creature unloved has power to exclude me from the "Kingdom of Heaven," where I can only enter by being one with the Whole.

"Love" is not desire of possession, but a type of that universal interchange which gives and takes, takes and gives, in continual evolution and perpetuation of Harmony. It is the divine essence seeking perfect equilibrium in the human soul.

"*In his place I might do worse.*" To say this with my whole heart is truly to love my neighbor.

Resistance is better than indifference. Our opponent is nearer our centre than the friend who listens courteously and forgets. Opposition is a sign of life. Do not revile it: pass it by. A mightier than we shall conquer it: his name is Death.

A "wicked" man is one whom the Law puts to more severe tests than myself. When I see one who commits great wrongs, I hear in my heart that medieval cry: "Make way for the Justice of God!" To be unjust is in itself the greatest punishment. When the Law passes judgment upon man, its justice is injustice avenging itself upon its creator.

As in politics the neutrals are the enemies of all, so those who are inactive in soul reject both "good" and evil, and fall into the gulf of oblivion.

Why do we pride ourselves upon our virtues? They are sterile, or they would have generated somewhat higher than virtue. A virtue which cannot become the mother of all virtues, is an abortive Truth.

Pain is the effort of nature to restore its lost harmonies; therefore pain is joy. Joy is the effort of nature to disturb the proportions of harmony by the exclusive appropriation of a selected note; therefore joy is pain. These together are the second lesson of life. The first is sex, itself a permitted discord whereby true harmony is better conceived.

The devout mind may sink a plummet into the soul. It cannot sound those depths. But it can awaken and arouse them, and they will go through some heavenly motions which mind may understand and record.

True Will is an instinctive motion of soul towards spirit.

No Karma is "bad" Karma. What we call evil fortune is simply nature's effort at re-adjustment.

Falsehood has ever a larger following than Truth. But the followers of Falsehood represent numbers only, while those of Truth stand for unknown quantities.

High places are points of culmination. Princes can only be judged by the general applications of laws. The subtle alchemy of royalty transmutes the heart's essences from volatile to deadly.

If you wish to destroy Karmic effects, destroy the fixed consciousness of "yourself." Live in the universal life and you will only inherit the universal Karma. This is "good," for the Karma of the manifestation is to return to the manifestor.

When we *conceive* the highest ideal of the Deity, we consciously enter its Being. When we have *realized* this ideal, the Diety consciously enters our Being. The ultimate of Being is one.

JASPER NIEMAND, F. T. S.

The Lessons of Karma.

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
"Rough-hew them how we will."

The idea most usually attached to the word Karma is, a power, inherent in the nature of things,—by the action of which good deeds are rewarded with happiness, while evil deeds bring suffering and pain. According to this view, Karma becomes a sort of moral police, continually adjusting and correcting the errors and extravagances of the human race, and vigilantly providing that none shall trespass on the domain of another.

Karma has been described as an application of the Law of Action and Re-action to the mental forces, and its spirit has been summed up in the words: "Whatsoever a man soweth, the same shall he also reap." And all this is undoubtedly true; and these ideas, when displacing the belief that occurrences are merely accidental and fortuitous, are of the highest importance; but though true in itself, this idea falls far short of the whole truth; for when examined scientifically it is found to be aimless; the continual action of this compensatory law, its perpetual adjusting and correcting, is mere temporising, it goes nowhither. It is nothing more than the endless swingings to-and-fro of an isolated pendulum. The pendulum is merely mechanical, and, when detached is unnatural; for all nature has a purpose, and moves ever onward. Nature is organic; much more so is super-nature.

If the limited view of Karma be compared to a pendulum, its true action might be represented by a tree;[1] and its rewards and punishments may be compared to leaves, produced in spring only to fall in autumn and again produced the next spring, only again to fall. But the tree is better than it was a year ago; the pendulum merely does its work to undo it again; but not so the tree. It has added something to itself by every effort, it has assimilated to itself an enlarged territory won from the inorganic world.

The force within and behind the tree works forward, and for definite ends, and this fact makes the tree a fitting emblem of the law of Karma.

Observation of life teaches us that beyond the mere rewarding, or compensatory action of pain and pleasure, they have another use; this deeper use is for discipline—development. In the light of subsequent insight, events which at the time seemed quite insignificant and objectless appear in their true light as teachers, and the lesson which they have taught—and for which and no other the learner was ripe, becomes evident.

By what appears at the time mere chance, one may meet a certain person, or group of people; conversation on various subjects may take

[1] The symbol of the Tree is an ancient Aryan one. They said the Tree grew head downward, its roots above.—[Ed.]

place; various views may be expressed, various feelings manifested: the necessary nourishment which the learner's growth demands may be received quite unnoticed; and years after, a sudden necessity or circumstance may reveal the purpose of that meeting, and may turn a beam of light on the grain of gold unconsciously received. This is true of all events, but chiefly of persons, the greatest of events.

Persons are the great teachers, the greatest revealers in the lesson of life; we may learn through another what our single sight might never have perceived.

Amongst the lessons to be learned from persons, perhaps the most important are those to be drawn from Sex.

Nature has grouped all human beings into two great classes,—sexes; each being complementary to the other, and this being true especially on the mental plane. Every peculiarity of each sex, each feature which differentiates it most notably from the other, is a further perfection of this complementary character, an additional attraction to bind the two sexes together in mutual harmony.

And when the highest perfection of this mutual harmony is attained, in complete good understanding and perfect sympathy, what lesson is learned?

The more perfect the sympathy—in its best sense, of sharing another's life, and penetrating it with filaments of love,—the more clearly this truth is apprehended:—that, far deeper than any difference between the sexes, lies a radical unity and identity; though masquerading under very different appearances, the soul of man and the soul of woman are the same, the same in the laws which govern their life, in their nature, and in their divinity.

It would seem that Life, the great teacher, having brought the evolving souls to vivid individual consciousness, and despairing of ever teaching them sympathy, of ever illumining for them the inner spiritual nature of each other and revealing to them their identity, had organised this charade of the sexes, had invented these masks of man and woman, male and female.

Besides this perception of identity, there is another lesson taught, another object subserved, by the complementary nature of the sexes. A poor cramped egotist enters the arena of life; all things seem to look bitterly upon him; a cloak of perpetual misery seems thrown over him; he seems tied and bound with iron bonds, so that in the presence of others he can never even be *himself*; he feels frost-bitten and crushed, and he knows that if by some miracle he could drink a deep draught of elixir and burst his bonds, he could at last walk upright—a man among men.

He is an egotist, an unfortunate, not sufficiently developed to learn the grand lesson of sympathy, and this through no taint of evil, but because the stream of life is half congealed within him, awaiting some miracle, some

angel to stir the waters into life. By and by the miracle happens; the great teacher brings him face to face with another soul, qualified in all things to supplement his deficiencies. At once he feels an infusion of supernal power. In the presence of this elect one, he feels thrilled with warm waves of celestial vigour; a part of the infinite promise of life is realised, one of the prophecies of spirit is fulfilled in joy. At last the poor egotist can burst his bonds; he tastes the divine sweetness of sympathy with another soul; he learns that threads of gold bind soul to soul, that soul traverses soul with ethereal arteries conveying to each the life of the other in addition to its own. And he learns also one sublime lesson—the divinity of renunciation. Through giving he receives; through self-sacrifice he inherits his kingdom.

And the lesson by no means ends here, in sympathy with a single soul,—great and notable benefit though that be. Gaining such large good from one, he learns to credit others with the same excellence; his faith extends in an ever widening circle, till at last he embraces all humanity in holy bonds of love.

If harmony teaches great lessons, great also are the lessons to be learned from discord.

All strife produces pain; as great pain to the oppressor as to the oppressed,—perhaps greater. Seek to tyrannize over another, and not only does that other rise against you, but within you rises a truer self, and takes the part of the oppressed. My every tyranny against my brother is at once punished by this truer self, with a corresponding weight of fear.

At last I learn the lesson, that one cannot be harmed without the harm reacting on the other, on all; that the well-being of one is inseparable from the well-being of all. I throw down my arms, and make amends by generous dealing. At once my brother's attitude changes, from enemy he becomes friend. He has been waiting for this opportunity to acknowledge me as brother; and once again the great teacher teaches the lesson of sympathy. Henceforth my brother's life is a part of my life, and the power we command belongs to both.

And thus the most ordinary events, and even our own errors, are turned to benefits. A firm hand, a power that sits above us, and whose secret we cannot command, guides our evil to wider good, and turns our erring energies into right channels.

Every event in life teaches its lesson, consciously or unconsciously, to us. If we are dull learners it may have to be repeated twice or many times; if we aid the teaching by ready perception, it may be taught but once, and then we can pass on to grander problems and higher themes.

Since every event thus bears for us a secret and spiritual value, and we cannot guess beforehand the nature of that value, is it not futile in us offi-

ciously to take on ourselves the direction of the lessons, with a grand assumption of omniscience; saying "To such a life I shall devote myself; such and such things shall I perform; and from such and such I shall abstain"; like an unskilled pilot without chart or compass, steering in the dark to an unknown land.

Were it not better to drop this pretence of wisdom which we cannot make good; boldly to face events as they meet us, and with good courage and resolution to dare and endure all things, so only that the golden lesson hidden in the events be not lost?

It has been hinted that those who seek wisdom should abandon all their present occupations and live the life of a desert ascetic; and some have even thought to draw down on themselves the gifts of divinity by a mere mechanical walking away from their duties; but not thus is life's secret to be surprised, by turning the back on our appointed duties, and more important still on the lessons they contain for us.

The books on wisdom are written in cypher; the true ascetic is he who, without abandoning his duties, renounces all selfish aims, and leaving behind his animal nature, takes refuge in the secret place of his soul.

Much more than this is allegorical, concealing a spiritual nature within it; perhaps, amongst others, the saying that earth's greatest sages dwell on her loftiest mountains is an allegorical picture of the truth that the divinest souls are those who have raised themselves furthest from earthly things to the peaks of purity, forever embosomed in the serene azure of spirit; for all things in the physical world have thus their inner vital meanings; though doubtless, were we to search earth's loftiest summits we would come face to face with the stately forms of holy sages, for as the spiritual fact is complete so also must the earthly picture of it be complete.

Life, the great Teacher, has thus designed his lessons. For those whose sight is gross, the teaching is framed in physical pictures, in faces, in trees, in mountains, and in the broad bosom of earth; but those whose sight is finer perceive within each of these a deeper and truer fact, for which alone these have their being.

These externals, forests and hills, the restless ocean, the everlasting stars, are ever eloquent sermons hymning the divinity of spirit. The life of the world says, with the *Erd-Geist* in *Faust*—

> "Thus at the roaring Loom of Time I ply,
> "And weave for God *the garment thou see'st him by.*"

The great teacher brings to us person after person, event after event; from each, as we are able, we learn its lesson; from each, as we are able, we wrest its secret, a value unknown and inscrutable until we are face to face with it.

Though at first the lesson may be bitter and unwelcome, we learn at last that what seemed bitter was in reality most sweet, and that what seemed hurtful

was pregnant with healing; in our highest moods we are one with the teacher and perceive his ends; in our moments of deepest insight, we perceive that the teacher is our true self; and though we may writhe under subsequent sharp lessons, we are willing to endure; certain that the suffering is for our ultimate benefit.

These considerations teach no indolent and idle acquiescence in the tide of events; our duty and advantage is to throw ourselves on the side of the teacher and to check all perverse tendencies which else would thwart and neutralise the lesson. Let those who esteem this an easy task, try it concientiously for a single day.

Since all events and persons have thus an interior and unapparent value, since all are intimately related to our development and lasting good, we infer that this truth holds for others also; and we are thus able to perceive dimly the mighty power and beneficent directing energy which lies behind life, turning the good and evil of each to the welfare of all. Let us therefore cast ourselves on Truth and work out our divine destiny without fear; this is the truest good for ourselves, and as surely is it the truest good for all others.

By working out our own divine destiny we gain the power of well doing, for he alone who has access to the heart of good can do good to his neighbor. Such laws as these teach us a noble carelessness of petty ends and events, and forbid forever all sordid taking thought for the morrow.

Perceiving the swing of these grand laws, we can boldly take in hand the game of life, with a heart for every fate. And so we find the first and last word of Karma to be discipline—development. But discipline to what end? Is it for the great prizes of earthly life? to glorify our three score years and ten?

Far otherwise is the tendency of these mighty laws; they lead not to wealth so often as to poverty, not to praise and fame so often as to contempt and obloquy, not so often to the throne as to the scaffold.

And thus,—unless we are bemocked by a lifelong illusion, unless we are the fools of a never-ending nightmare,—we have, in the sweep and tendency of these majestic laws, an intimation of our higher destiny and a sure certificate of our immortal good.

"Then first shalt thou know,
"That in the wild turmoil,
"Horsed on the Proteus,
"Thou ridest to power,
"And to endurance,"

CHARLES JOHNSTON, F. T. S.

The Bean of Pythagoras

In a recent number of the *Theosophist* is a paragraph in reply to an enquirer as to "*why* Pythagoras banned the bean," which seems to me as far from correct as the explanations given by an Athenian skeptic who derisively said that "beans are the substance which contains the largest portion of that animated matter of which our souls are particles," and that the flowers of the bean put in a vessel and buried ninety days would deposit in the bottom of the vessel the head of a child; concluding, amid bursts of laughter, that Pythagoras himself has made the experiment.

Beans were anciently used in casting votes by balloting, the white beans for affirmative and the black ones negative. When Pythagoras said to his disciples, "Abstain from beans," he had no reference to them as an article of diet, for he ate them himself. What he did mean, and what his immediate followers already understood, was that they should abstain from the intrigues of politics as being antagonistic to a philosopher's pursuits.

It also couched a warning of the danger of criticising the popular government.

All the divine teachers have taught in symbols and inverted language, and time has proven the wisdom of this method.

He that had "eyes to see," or "ears to hear," saw and heard then, as now; and the poor little cursed bean is a symbol of the "letter that killeth."

If I have restored the bean to its deserved place of honor on our tables, I have done a good work for the oncoming rule of vegetarianism under which all true theosophists must come soon or late.

Perhaps it may be in place to say that *all* the supposed gastric difficulties the bean is reported to cause may be entirely overcome by boiling, both the green and the dry, in a weak solution of soda, for ten or fifteen minutes, before reboiling them in the usual manner.

The foregoing considerations arose in my mind because of the question frequently raised by vegetarian occultists—in embryo—that beans, having some unknown and peculiar property of retarding spiritual development, should be eschewed by those who are cultivating psychic powers. Nothing was certain in the matter, however, and the great fear of beans has seemed to have its foundation in a mystery that I hope I have solved.

I am quite sure too that, even if the bean has any retarding inflence, it cannot act upon real spiritual progress, for that rests primarily upon right thought, speech, and action.

H. L. Sumner, F. T. S.

The Way of the Wind.

It is one of the gratifying signs of the times, and a pleasing indicative straw to point the way of the wind, that we should find in the *Forum* of Dec., 1887, such an article as the one by Professor W. H. Parker, entitled "Arguments for the Unseen." Disclaiming both orthodoxy and advance thought as it were, this writer presents much evidence which might have fallen from the pen of an occultist—an occultist such as he himself would be if he realized the full inferences from his own statements. The Arguments are clearly, even limpidly, put, and the article must do much good in opening such minds as will only hear those ideas which they consider "safe," "sound," *and acceptable to the community at large.* What it is they wish to save, or fear to lose, unless it be the consistency of ignorance, prejudice, or limitation, and what could be more "sound" than Truth, we do not know and will not ask of those who would be "*plus royaliste que le roi.*" We quote a few paragraphs of the article as its best recommendation to those who desire to think more, or to induce others to think more, in the direction of the Unseen.

"He sees not his fellow man, but only an outward manifestation of an unknown force, be that force vital or chemical or other. He who believes that man is made in the image of God, accepting our spiritual nature, realizes that every human assembly is an assembly of spirits unseen."

The above might refer either to the presence of the "astral men" or doubles, or even to the existence of that entity known to many occultists as the "Higher Self of the unseen world. It often implies, however, that the inhabitants of that world were in ready communication with the earth, and this implication favors an inference that we are surrounded by an invisible world."

"Without touching on the many debatable phenomena that come under the discussion of the old psychology and the new so-called psychical research, and without giving any credence to the claims of modern spiritism, we have the further fact that in life and health we are dealing with none but invisible beings. The materialist himself must acknowledge that the unknown quantity which constitutes personality amid all the change and degradation of bodily tissue, is beyond dissection, is deathless, and that some organizing force beyond his ken precedes and accompanies organism."

Compare the above with the statement in "Esoteric Buddhism" that the 3rd principle guides the 2nd, or Jiva, the life force, in its task of building up the body.

"Facts suggest that a great exaltation of senses * * may sometimes bring to sight or hearing, not phantasms, but realities never perceived in our ordinary life."

"Since, therefore, we know scarcely anything directly, our seeming direct knowledge of the outward world, and our seeming lack of such knowledge in regard to any spiritual world above it, are illusive."

"Men of science least of all, should shrug their shoulders at mention of the Unseen. In their own way they deal more with the hidden, the invisible, the vanished, or the future, than with the tangible."

"The great Unseen, for which we have intimations and reasons, is as real as the Seen, or more so. Enough that we know not the visible in itself, but only by some message it sends to us from afar, truly so when it seems nearest. There is no light, no color, as we apprehend these, outside of the mind. Let the vibrations cease, and everything vanishes; let the molecules cease to give forth resistant force, and nothing is tangible. Since, therefore, the physical world is so tremulous, shadowy, spiritual, it is no presumption against a hidden universe that it affects us as something dreamy and unsubstantial. Granting that matter is composed of atoms, still there is nothing solid except to our sensations. An eminent English mathematician has calculated that, in a piece of dense metal, the atoms must be as far apart as 100 men would be when distributed at equal distances from each other over the surface of England; that is, one to every 500 square miles. Surely no supramundane world could be much more at variance with all that we deem firm and substantial."

"Brown Sequard observed that certain cholera patients remained clear and active in mind when their blood was becoming black and clotted in the last stages of the disease; a fact inconsistent with the identity of mind and brain, since the latter depends on the blood for its activity."

"Analogy demands a destiny of boundless splendors and activities for those (mankind) who begin their career on so vast a material platform."

"Man is the first of a new series—*the spiritual.*"

"If anything is temporal, it is the Seen; if anything is eternal, it is the Unseen."

All the above are theosophical teachings, and are, moreover, elaborated and accounted for by those teachings. In respect to the statements concerning the uncertainty of sense-evidence and the debt which we are under to Vibration, the following quotation from Hartmann's Experiments may interest the general reader. A metallic rod is suspended in a dark room: "Let the same be connected with some mechanical contrivance by which it can be made to vibrate and increase the vibrations gradually to a certain extent, and we will have the following result: * * When the vibrations rise to the number of more than 32 per second * * the drum of our ear then begins to vibrate in consonance with the rod, and we hear a sound of deep sonorous bass. As the vibrations increase, the sound increases in pitch and runs up through the musical scale to the

highest note, when, at 36,000 vibrations per second, all sound ceases and the rod becomes imperceptible to our senses. All through the long interval from 36,000 up to 18 millions of vibrations per second, we can neither hear nor see the rod; but at this point it begins to affect our sense of feeling by emitting radiant heat. At a still higher rate the heat ceases, a dull red glow appears which becomes perceptible to our sight and runs up through all the colors of the solar spectrum; through yellow, green, blue, purple, and violet, until at eight billions of vibrations all light disappears and the rod, as far as our senses are concerned, has ceased to exist, although its presence can still be proved by its exhibition of chemical action."

It is interesting to note that the above phenomena follow that order which occult science indicates as the creative order. Ether was first of the creative elements; its special property is sound. Air next; its special property is tangibility or affecting the sense of feeling. Fire third; its property is color, and it affects the sense of sight. Water and earth are the most gross; they affect the senses of taste and smell; the rod in its normal condition would be cognizable by these, and perhaps also in still more heightened chemical action. Professor Parker also alludes to the well known fact that the optic nerve in ordinary men is blind to all colors below the red and above the violet. Professor Tyndall states this as follows, in his work on Light and Electricity. "The radiation composing the solar spectrum possesses a dimension much larger than that of which the eye can take cognisance. This spectrum is in reality composed of three distinct parts.

1st. Luminous rays, which, acting on the retina of the eye, constitute the spectrum of seven simple colors.

2d. Rays lying within the red ray, and which do not affect the vision, but the existence of which is scientifically demonstrated by their calorific power.

3d. Rays lying beyond the violet, equally invisible, but whose existence is not the less demonstrable by chemical tests. Thus the spectrum consists of three sorts of rays: Calorific, Luminous, and Chemical, the second of which only is directly appreciable by the organ of vision, the existence of others being ascertained by experimental observation involving an exercise of mind." He further states that the rays beyond the violet "manifest their action, not in heat or light, but in the operation of composition, decomposition, and allied phenomena," and that all these three orders of effects result from a variation in the vibrations of the Etherial Medium. Clairvoyants and seers under an excitation of the senses also see through ordinary matter, which Professor Parker has shown us in his Arguments is far less "dense" than is ordinarily supposed.

J. Campbell Ver Planck.

Answers to Questioners.

From Adelphi.

A most perplexed individual is writing to you. I have been fort hree years endeavoring to study Theosophy. I have heard lectures, have read an immense amount of literature devoted to that cult, from the sages of old down to the Sinnetts, Olcotts, and Blavatskys of the present day. I have conned the Yoga Philosophy and I read THE PATH. Light on the Path aids me not, nor does Bhavagad-Gita, and why? Because I am yet without the first steps towards practice. (Surely Theosophy—like other sciences—must have *something* practical about it?) Guide me with your friendly hints. Imagine me alone in a room. How to commence? Show me the first step upon the practical ladder! All I have heard and read seemeth to me so elaborately unintelligible that I lay it aside and beg you to instruct me in my Theosophical A B C. Astral Light! Is it a figurative light, *i. e.* Revelation? or is it a light, as electricity—the Heavens—coal—gives light? If abstraction (into insensibility) is necessary, can you instruct me upon Hypnotism (self mesmerism.)? "A shining object" is advised to stare at! A mirrow is a shining object, for instance. But of what avail to stare at a mirror and see reflected ugliness!

Answer—You say that for three years you have been endeavoring to *study* Theosophy. Such being the case, you will meet with but little success. Divine Wisdom can not be a subject for *study*, but it may be an object of *search*. With the love for this same wisdom uppermost in our hearts, we ask you if it would not be wiser to lay aside the *study* of so called Theosophy and study yourself. Knowing yourself you know all men, the worlds seen and occult, and find Theo-Sophia. One cannot absorb Theosophy as a sponge does water, to be expelled at the slightest touch. Our conception of Theosophy is apt to be based upon the idea that it is an especial line of teaching—a larger, wider, and greater doctrine than others perhaps, but still a doctrine, and therefore limited. We must bear in mind that the true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all; that he can find the true object of his search equally as well in the Hebrew bible as in the Yoga philosophy, in the New Testament equally as well as in the Bhagavad-Gita.

You say you have "conned the Yoga philosophy." This is not enough; merely to "con" it is not to know it. It is in fact a most practical system (if you refer to that of Patanjali), and one that will meet all requirements you have in the way of difficulty: for it is one of the most difficult. It is not possible for you to judge its merits without practice: and it gives full directions. If for three years you study and practice it—aye for one year—you will find that you need no other. In these matters there is no child's play nor the usual English and American method of mere book-learning,—we must absorb and work into the practice and the theory laid down, for they are not written merely for the *intellect* but for the whole spiritual nature. There must be within the man something which he

already knows, that leaps up and out when he scans the books of wisdom; a thing already existing, which only takes an added life or confirmation from books. True Theosophy has all that is practical, but many forget this; there is no greater system of practise than that required by it. .

Desire wisdom; love all men; do your duty; forget yourself; let each thought and act of your life have for its aim the finding of divine wisdom; strive to apply that wisdom for the good of other men. If you search in every direction, Light must come to you. Let the place in which you now are be the lonely room you speak of, and seek to find in everything the meaning. Strive to know what they are, and by what governed or caused. This is the first step. Live your life with this ever before you. Purify your thought as well as your body. Reason all you can, feel all with your heart you may, and when intellect and heart fail you, seek for something higher. This is the A. B. C.; it is enough for the present.

It is not Theosophy that is a science, but its application. It is not a "cult," for it covers and includes all.

The Astral Light is an actuality. It is not revelation, but a means through which that which causes revelation acts. Electricity, the heavens, all lower fires, are but the shadows of the Astral Light, just as the Astral Light is but the darkness of the Ineffable Light.

Abstraction into insensibility is not intended. If it had been so intended it would be unnecessary for us to be in these bodies. If you can forget yourself sufficiently—forget that you exist as a human body, you will not need to stare at a mirror; but so long as you realize, when staring into a glass, whether you be pretty or ugly, you can not reach Celestial sensibility or terrestial insensibility.

Hypnotism is the controlling of other personalities. Under this you would be but a puppet for the thought of another. Your outer self had better become a puppet for your own thought.

We seek to make the body alive, not to kill it. ZADOK.

To Julius, From M. J. G.

My question was perverted in December PATH, and I don't know whether to be vexed or annoyed at it. I did *not* ask what the effect of hasheesh was; in a theosophic book I saw it was said Anæsthetics opened the doors of the astral world, and made inquiry to that effect. What I wished to know was the explanation of the experience of finding myself, while walking down the village street, feeling as if I had walked interminably, or, as illustrated by Bayard Taylor, who, after taking hasheesh, thought that while walking only a block in the city he had walked for ages.

If you can explain my condition or its cause at the times I speak of—they occurred twice—last summer when I had the sensation, I should be glad.

Answer.—We intended no perversion. The seeming drift of the first question was as to anæsthetics opening the doors of the astral world. That seemed more important than a single experience of any individual. Unless

we knew the state of your health last summer, occupation, kind of food, and many other matters not in our purview, we could not give the cause of, much less explain, your condition at the time you speak of. It seemed in December, as it does now, that it was highly important to strangle a possible error as to anæsthetics and the astral world. Hasheesh is a partial anæsthetic, and as it apparently caused Bayard Taylor's feeling, our previous reply applies quite fairly.

But where such an experience is not brought on by drugs or other substances, it may occur from various causes, nearly all of them having relation to some derangement or obstruction in the body. Certain movements or affections of the spleen bring it on, and at other times the brain may cause it; but in nearly all cases it is felt by means of the brain. The sensation is analagous to the dream-state in which time disappears, for we know that during the sounding of the crash of a breaking plate one can dream an experience of 20 years, with all their circumstances. In your case—whatever the physical predisposing cause—you had a waking dream interlaced with waking consciousness and connotation of objects. This double state enabled you to register the experience clearly; it gave you a glimpse of what is meant by Proclus when he says, "The period of the first soul is measured by the whole of time." It gave only a glimpse, because the sensation had relation to only *one* of many states composing the whole. We can refer you to many other sensations similarly partial, while at the same time very different from yours. As, for instance: feeling and hearing that the slightest sound—made even by a fly creeping on a paper—had the force and mighty energy of Niagara's roar. It also gives some meaning to the statement that "one day is as 1,000 years and 1,000 years as one day, to God."

Inasmuch as we do our best to answer, we are sorry that your "vexation and annoyance at the perversion" has apparently prevented you from seeing what we did mean in December. We thank you for addressing the questions and enabling us to obtain some ideas thereupon. JULIUS.

TEA TABLE TALK.

There is a curious old story to be found in one of the Brahmanic sacred books. It apparently refers to the trials of higher chelaship, and runs somewhat as follows.

"A young man of a very high and respectable family had an only sister. She became a widow; and then they both renounced the world, went to a Yogee in a distant place, and offered themselves as his pupils. The Yogee said that they were not yet ripe for chelaship; that they had yet much bad

Karma to exhaust, but that if they would return to their native town and live for a time (say ten months) in a particular manner, then he would accept them. They agreed, and accordingly set up a shed (*pandal*) *in their own native town*, where they were well known for high birth and good character. The shed was in a prominent place on the high road. It had no rooms at all, but only a small enclosure which barely afforded shelter from the sun. There they lived alone together, regardless of conventionalities, always cheerful and even merry. The world began to slander them as badly as possible, saying that the brother and sister were living as husband and wife. But the two pupils never defended themselves, though persecuted most miserably. Everyone spat upon them as immoral wretches and threw stones on them. Still these two did not stir from their place, but bore all patiently. They became the victims of even the poorest, who had before been assisted by them, and of the meanest and most wicked people of the country. The ten months passed. The pupils found that the world had no real charm at all. They had thus exhausted the necessary quantity of bad Karma and stood the trial. They were accordingly accepted by the Yogee."

This little tale serves as an allegory. It shows us how necessary it is, when first we desire to enter the path, to exhaust our bad Karma by patiently living it out, there where we find ourselves placed at the time. It demonstrates that we cannot proceed by a violent leap away from all the rest of this present life, but that we must work out from it in due sequence, and that even should we attempt to make such an abrupt bound, we are sure to be sent back. Whether by the chosen Teacher or by the Law matters but little: we are sent back, and our sudden action has added to previous Karma acquired by deeds wholly relating to self. We are also shown, on the page of this ancient book, that our effort to cast off the unreal life for the real places us in a very different position in the eyes of those about us, with whom we hitherto stood well. They regard us with suspicion; our carelessness of worldly opinion, our acceptance of solitude and poverty of spirit for the sake of the Truth and the search for the Truth, implies a reproach—though we intend none—to the lovers of the mere outward life, and they cast a slur upon us, whether in silence or openly. So we enter upon a career of trouble and isolation from the outset. It sometimes happens that through favorable circumstances, we are received by the world on the same outward footing, but inwardly a chill has fallen between us and it, even with dear friends. It is felt that we no longer belong to the same party, that we have announced an independent judgment, and a critical attitude at least towards all those fictions and tyrannies which the world has agreed to keep up, in the service of convenience, convention, custom, and false ideals. And while we should be careful to do no violence to our ties and duties, (whether of family or of station), to keep the civic and moral laws and to some extent even the social rules of the civilization in which we live, still when all this is done, the question frequently arises:—"what can I do to prove my faith?"

It is a question often addressed to us and passed from one theosophist to another: it is a most difficult question to answer, because the reply cannot be

made to fit all circumstances. But if we take large and high ground, perhaps we can find an answer applicable to every case, in some part at least. If we say that in the denial and uprooting of self the first active step upon the path is taken, then we have opened up a subject of immense possibilities. For it is not asceticism, nor mortification of the flesh, nor rude rough ways of life that we mean, but we refer to the inner attitude.

Most of us look upon the rainfall, or the failure of the crops, or an accident detrimental to our interests, in the light of their effect upon us. Yet these things have a greater bearing: they may conduce to universal ends. Here the first solution of our problem meets us; we must try to live in the life of the whole; try with reason when we can, and with faith where reason or perception fail us, to realize that all things from the fall of the leaf to the dreaded earthquake are conducted by universal law; that this law is one of harmony; that all is well with the universe as it steadily advances along the evolutionary track, and that all must therefore be well with each one of us, as parts of this progressive whole. Our higher interests, our *real* interests, are served by all these joys and trials alike, and if we make sufficient effort, we can remain above them in thought; the inner attitude can be one of lofty and patient calm. The power of any and every circumstance to annoy or unbalance us on either hand is a given quantity: we ourselves are the variants, and our vibrations to and fro, scatter, disturb, and disseminate the molecules of the inner man quite as much as they ruffle and cloud that still surface of the soul whose high office it is to mirror the Spirit. Let us then strive to raise ourselves up, and to lift others up to that far, blazing star above the tempest, the star of Truth.

Very often we hamper ourselves by preconceived ideas to which we cling. These totally blind us to Truth. Since we do not presently know all things, we must be somewheres in error, and very likely we are most so at just that point where our hearts are most fixed. For attachment and hatred bind us equally to some idol of our own making. Many students who are trying to "live the life" ask why so many very good and pious men have not become occultists, have not even caught a glimpse of the real goal. It is principally because they have erred by "violence of direction," and have tried to live by the exercise of certain selected qualities alone. They have set a god on high whose worship has atrophied reason and narrowed faith. For mark that if you suggest to them that there may be a higher god than this, or a religion equally true, they are incredulous or indignant. They live upon and within forms; they have stunted the perceptive faculties of the soul and paralysed its instructive desire for *Truth at all costs and all hazards*. This desire must lie at the root of the soul, for it was the desire to create and experience in matter which sent it forth from the Spirit to seek the manifestation of Truth in this life, and which now urges its return towards the Great Center of resplendent verities. Truth, whether manifest below or above, is the same, but the manifestation is different. We shut ourselves out from Truth when we repel any manifestation, or confine our belief to any one of her modes of working in matter. In the ultimate alone is she One. Blindness to these facts makes us take some such view as that of an esteemed contemporary, who

explained a doubt of the teachings of Theosophy because some "theosophical" acquaintance believed that his aged and invalid mother was obsessed by an elemental! The Widow tittered when she read this, and remarked that she now doubted the moons of Jupiter *because* she knew "an astronomer who had dyspeptic fits and was as cross as—as—"

"As the devil in a gale of wind;" suggested Didymus.

The Widow, who is nothing if not conventional, gave a small shriek at this. I noticed that she required much soothing—from Didymus, not from me; somehow I can't soothe "worth a cent." The plumes of the fair satirist sufficiently preened, she remarked:

"You men needn't talk. Haven't we heard that some Hindu pundit is so incensed that Eastern doctrines should be taught to the profane West, that he is going to tear the "Secret Doctrine" to tatters, *by showing that it don't agree with his view of Brahmanic teachings*, 'more power to it' if it don't?"

"I like the cheek of those Indian ducks;" murmured Didymus.

A chorus of "Absurd!" "Fancy!" "Don't be slangy!" arose. I put it down firmly.

"Ladies and Gentlemen; I do not defend either attitude. To the looker-on, they are simply delicious—as studies of human nature. They are pure hysteria. They are twinges of emotional insanity. Hysteria for hysteria, give me the female form of it. It is more likely, on the whole, to be all right at heart. In every true woman there is something nobly virile; every true man has a finer touch of his mother in him. But I beg you to observe that we must eschew the personal view, if we are to find out true facts. The idol-worshipper; the form-worshipper; the pedant; the emotional enthusiast who makes a god of the mere human heart; the religionist *pur et simple*, all these are confined to one view, and self is at the bottom of their creed. Even the atheist deifies self. Our instant need is to ascertain some modicum of Truth untinged by the personal view, and to go to work on that. Our friends may be all right at heart but, Lord! what twaddle their tongues do emit when they insist on our measuring Truth with their yardstick. Let us listen most to the Universal Voice: it speaks, not of or in us, but through us.

Show me a self-styled "conservative" man, and I will show you a man who lives among shadows, and in himself vainly strives to animate a shade. His friends have long gone away from the place where he still beholds their imaginary characters standing, lit (to his eyes) into seeming life by the dim light of the past. With these spectres he holds converse, and his friends try to answer him through the lifeless intermediaries; they try to meet him for a moment on the forgotten basis of the past, and are sometimes pleased to tickle their own self-esteem with the image of an impossible consistency. Just so the scholar, overweighted by his learning, thinks that the great, living, busy world is concerned with his denunciations of false quantities or scholastic dogma. To it these weighty facts are puppets moved by his self importance; it is mainly concerned with Life, not with creeds, and it soars onward, leaving him impotent and a little foolish, in the dust with his weapon of straw. If he is wise, he will not confront it with past issues. So conservatism is im-

possible so far as Life is concerned. Even Death is not consistent, but changes, dissolves, and rends with furious energy. "Consistency" is a man-made product; I find no analogy in nature. When I lie down to sleep, am I the same man who rose that morning? When I rise, where is he who lay there and dreamed? Just as physical science tells us that organic tissue is momently dying, changing, receiving, and transmitting, so the mind also changes at the contact of every new thought, the heart with each new emotion. Man is an ever new or renewed being, begotten of the old, and the "conservative" is left between the horns of this dilemma: either he has changed without being aware of it, (until some moral cataclysm reveals the standing of the real, inner man), or he is a dead man; dead in all spiritual sense while the physical machine has not yet run down. It behooves us to open our minds to the possibilities of Truth, for the cause of most ills is in the mind. It is the predetermination of our attitude that makes it serious and injurious. "I am a believer in predestination." "I am weak and defeated." I cannot believe so and so." There are the mental chimeras which work havoc with our lives. Above them all the Serene Self looks down, calm and unimpaired. May we take refuge there! May we realize that there alone is our true existence! May we embrace no lower ideal!

In these grim and frost bitten days I love to remember how the wandering Tea-Table had a little butterfly farm in a sunny bay window late last autumn. There amid the falling leaves, the patter and gurgle of rain on low eaves, or the solemn drip from the black pines on to the graves of June roses—there we watched some gauze-imprisoned worms, brave fellows in black velvet and gold vesture, working out the eternal miracle of Death-in-Life for the instruction of occultists in embryo. Even brighter skies, the pipe of winds and autumn banners flaring from the hills, could not tempt us out while the wonder was still in hand. The captives fed grossly on milkweed for a while, journeyed, hobnobbed, regarded the world, reached a period of fevered activity in which they knew nor pause nor rest, then found a secluded spot and concluded to remain there. Fierce was their anger at any fellow who drew near or disturbed them, savage on its own scale as the wrath of the lion, while they deposited their worldly store in the shape of a little white gluten, sparkling like saccharine crystals and exuded from the proboscis, upon the gauze roof. I invite all occultists to consider these analogies: the gluten, quintessence of the worm, formed a link between two worlds. When sufficient had been deposited to form a tiny spike-like projection, the worm ceased to work it with the head and moved slowly over it until it could insert the spike into a minute opening in the end of the body or tail. Giving due time to the gluten to harden and become fixed there, (whatever impregnating office it might fill we know not), after several essays the worms finally let themselves gradually down until they hung suspended in air from the spike of gluten, now hard as a gravel granule and firmly rooted in the tail. Vibration after vibration ran through every coil now in double series, one series from head to tail, another from tail to head: occultists will recognize this universal movement. The vibrations increased in rapidity during a period of twenty-

four hours, when at last a violent effort is visible and with body movement and quick head strokes combined the worm cracks open at the back, feverishly and rapidly "shuffles off this mortal coil" of black and gold, which falls th the ground, leaving a light green worm momentarily visible. Only momentarily; this renewed creature doubles itself up, joins head to tail, working the neck around the spike of gluten; the head falls off, the doubled up body is all fused together by the same vibratory movement, and in two minutes or less there hangs from the gauze an exquisite smooth green satin casket, which an exudation presently studs with gilt nails around its dome-shaped top, closing it, I know not how. The effort of these two minutes is really something terrible to witness, yet the work is accomplished with supreme ease after all, when we consider the marvelous consummation. This casket, erst the inner (second) body of the creature, is now in process of becoming a mere casement for the mysterious germ sleeping within. During two weeks it becomes more and more translucent, its fibre is gradually assimilated, and the bright wing markings and color dots of the third form are at last visible beneath the thin shell. Some fine morning towards noon (in some dozen observed) this shell cracks at the back, a winged, brilliant creature lets itself down from the shrivelling isinglass-like case, slowly unfolds, like a flower, and like the flower clasps the stem; for still it grasps the case. Not at once does it relinquish the abandoned habit, remember.[1] All earthly dross must be purified from the creature of the skies. So while he vibrates still more tremulously than ever before, waving and trying his wings, there is a drip, as of life blood, from his quivering body. This over, he rests, and we ask, why does he not fly? Hours after, he is seen to suddenly lift his head. The divine thought has touched him! With instant recollection and power he rises, makes an exultant dash for the blue regions, and soars in ever widening circles, lost to us, discovered anew to life. Never have I seen any thing more inspired than the electric swiftness of that instinct, coming so suddenly to all. We have placed them on the pines in resinous sunshine, or upon the flower; they will not stir until they hear the soundless admonition; they wait for the ripe moment of the Law: so they never falter in that strong flight. We have lost sight of them, but wide-eyed Science has seen that they presently return to the terrestial fields, and, full of heaven's sweet essences, have birth in other lives.

This stage of their journey, this visible passage from the first to the third form by means of an essential coupling or link, is most beautiful and typical. Go into your gardens when the year swings round again; gather milkweeds and captives; net them in airy gauze, and nature will teach you how the soul emerges from husk after husk. She will teach you Reincarnation; she will show what a broad scope of change is necessary and appointed to all growth; she will demonstrate that resistance to this Law on any plane is retardation, while as yet only an incipient, encrusting habit; is Death eternal when the habit becomes fixed in the petrified soul.

JULIUS.

1 See Jan. PATH, 1888, Page 290; on the relinquishment of intermediate forms.

Literary Notes.

Posthumous Humanity:—*A study of Phantoms.* By A. d'Assier, translated and annotated by H. S. Olcott. This is a treatise on the existence, manifestations, and constitution of man's posthumous personality, of his "Double" appearing during life, and of a like "Double" in animals and vegetables. It defines a phantom as "a gaseous tissue offering a certain resistance," and considers magnetic fluid the generative cause of the principle producing it. Collateral topics naturally come up,—electric animals and plants, somnambules, seers, mediums, etc., all connected through magnetic origin, as well as lycanthropy, obsessions, incubi, and vampires. The author is an avowed positivist, and for that reason rejects both supernatural explanations and inadequate testimony, though once incautiously asserting as a "common fact," but without evidence, that electricity in the United States so abounds as to make bushes seem incandescent and door-knobs startle strangers with sparks! As to this, Col. Olcott remarks that he lived 47 years in the United States without encountering these phenomena. The book is not original or profound, few new facts are given, and the treatment is superficial. The explanation of spectres' photophobism (Page 90) is both imaginary and imperfect, nor does the translator puncture the error on this page that the phantom is seen only out of strong light; it is well known to the contrary: that of their production of noises resembling breakages (Page 94) is open to serious criticism; that of the decay of witchcraft (Page 212) is utterly flimsy and shows that M. d'Assier has not read Lecky,—as, indeed, does also his credulity as to lycanthropes, vampires, and incubi, though of the latter discussion Col. Olcott too modestly declines to translate the larger part. No explanation is given of the emphasized phenomenon of fine literary composition by illiterate mediums. The competency of the French mind to "talk around" and not grapple with a subject is continually illustrated.

Col. Olcott, however, adds frequent notes, amplifying or correcting the theories of the author from an Esoteric stand-point, and throwing on them the rich light of his scholarship and vast Oriental experience. After each note the reader contrasts author and annotator, and mourns that the latter had not written the text. Col. Olcott also furnishes an Appendix giving the opinions current in various sections of India upon Kama Loka, spectres, sorcery, and so on. This is a contribution to ethnological study, but has not, we think, much force as proving fact, inasmuch as the various tales and popular views collected must need much sifting as well as explanation by those versed in occultism. Many popular expressions of actual occult laws are, in fact, travesties upon the actualities that have given rise to the vulgar idea. We hope at another time to obtain and publish reasonable expositions respecting some of the things recorded in this Appendix. Pages 331-333 are most interesting. *(Redway, London, 1887; 7s, 6d.)*

The Philosophy of Cure, by E. D. Babbitt M. D.,—a condensed, tabulated compendium of facts in Physiology, Chemistry, Pathology, Magnetism.

Light, and Color, based upon the principle that Nature is better than Art, and having as object the exposition of a natural and rational system of Therapeutics.

Welcome is due every scientific work that recalls men to the vital and vitalizing powers of Nature, and emancipates them from the evil of drugs, which, as Dr. Babbitt says, have caused more deaths than war. He finds these powers in sunlight and electricity, and applies them to the cure of disease through sun-baths and magnetic massage. We have always held that the curative agents of the future would be these powers, and it is no small confirmation of such belief to find it advocated in a treatise so competent, scientific, luminous, sensible, and practical. The *sensible* quality of the book is one of its greatest merits. A just, dispassionate, discriminating spirit everywhere appears notably in the treatment of Homœopathy, Mind Cure, and Faith Cure; and freedom from either the twaddle of the conventionalist or the fanaticism of the doctrinaire is shown in the remarks on the moral influence of nudity and in the exposition of Chromopathy and of sound spelling.

Dr. Babbitt distinctly recognizes the action of etherial forces. He finds the underlying principle of all force in spirit, and says that "spirit may be called the *primate* of all force." In a brief account of Statuvolence, which he defines as "A method of bringing the more refined psychic ethers of the interior brain into predominance over the system, in the place of the grosser animal ethers which ordinarily rule," and in warnings against extravagance and one-sided theorists, he gives indications of a Theosophic training and of a temperateness which does not always accompany it.

The paper and type are exceptionally good, and the illustrations exceptionally bad. Anything worse than the portraits of Catherine II and Whitfield we have rarely encountered. The ghastly corpse of a young girl on page 29 seems to have no raison d'etre,—unless, perhaps, to show what medicine may effect, and the alluring "Spirit of the Mountain" on page 58 has not even that. Some assertions need a little qualification. The Egyptian *sais* are by no means naked, and, though it is true that they outrun fast horses, it is equally true that they die in five years. The great strength of various savage nations has other explanations besides nudity. Gen. Pleasanton's famous experiments with blue glass have had important results, but some of his conclusions have, we believe, been discredited by later investigators. And Dr. Babbitt should not say "commence" when he means "begin." He is much opposed to tobacco.

THE FUTURE RULERS OF AMERICA, or Hermetic Tract No. 1, is by Bro. W. P. Phelon, President of Ramayana Branch T. S. It is entertaining and prophetical of what America holds for the future. *(Hermetic Pub. Co., Chicago.)*

"REINCARNATION: A STUDY OF FORGOTTEN TRUTH" is the title of a book by E. D. Walker shortly to be published in Boston. It will be a 12 mo. volume of about 350 pages, and a careful investigation of the subject from a western standpoint, enlarged and extended from the series of five papers

upon Reincarnation by that writer published in THE PATH last year. The work will contain chapters upon Western Evidences of Reincarnation; Western Objections to Reincarnation; Reincarnation in Western Literature, (Prose and Poetic); Reincarnation among the Ancients; in the Bible; in Early Christendom; in The East to-day; Esoteric Reincarnation; Eastern Poetry of Reincarnation; Transmigration through Animals; Death, Heaven and Hell; Karma; and a Bibliography of Reincarnation.

THE POPULAR CRAZE—CHRISTIAN SCIENCE, is a brochure by Ursula N. Gootefeld of Chicago (1887). Its object is to show that "Christian Science" is the nonsense of to-day but that it will be the sense of the future. We cannot agree with the extravagant claim on p 27. that the Redemption of man "will be through woman when she is allowed to lead and he follows her along the upward way." It is a strange fact—even in Christian history—that Redeemers and their great prophets were men. On p. 28 it is stated that "spiritual perception is the sixth sense which opens for man many closed doors." To this we cannot subscribe, because our school of occultism teaches, and proves, that the sixth sense is *not* spiritual, but only a higher (material) sense than we now possess. It also seems philosophically incorrect (at least from an occultist's standpoint) to say: "the human mind determines the kind and quality of our thought only so long as we are in ignorance," and so on. We would more gladly praise such books as these if it were not that the whole so-called psychological science of America looks like boy's play to one who has found the same ground passed over and given up by the Aryans long ago; after having studied for ages to find the mind's ground and foundation, they record different conclusions from our psychologists, and we have a greater respect for the ancients in these matters than for speculations that have only just begun in a nation which as yet has not evolved the mere words needed for the proper expression of what is included by them in the term "mind."

CORRESPONDENCE.

The following letter has been sent to Madame Blavatsky from New York. It is not intended to reflect upon the East Indians as a body in any way; but solely to show why the signers desire that the *Secret Doctrine* should not be held back because some Indian pundits are against it.—[ED.]

NEW YORK, January 10, 1888.

MADAME H. P. BLAVATSKY,

RESPECTED CHIEF:—We have just heard that you have been asked to withdraw from publication the *Secret Doctrine*.

This extraordinary request emanates, we are told, from members of the Theosophical Society, who say that if the book is brought out it will be attacked or ridiculed by some East Indian pundits, and that it is not wise to antagonize these Indian gentlemen.

We most earnestly ask you not to pay heed to this desire, but to bring out the *Secret Doctrine* at the earliest possible day.

It is a work for which we, and hundreds of others all over the United States, have been waiting for some years, most of us standing firmly on the promise made by yourself that it was being prepared and would appear.

While the West has the highest regard for the East Indian philosophy, it is, at the same time, better able to grasp and understand works that are written by those acquainted with the West, with its language, with its usages and idiom, and with its history, and who are themselves westerns. As we well know that it is from the West the chief strength of the Theosophical Society is to come, although its knowledge and inspiration may and do reach us from the East, we are additionally anxious that you, who have devoted your life to this cause and have hitherto granted us the great boon found in *Isis Unveiled*, should not now stop almost at the very point of giving us the *Secret Doctrine*, but go on with it in order that we may see your pledge fulfilled and another important stone laid in the Theosophical edifice.

Further, we hasten to assure you that it makes but small difference—if any whatever—here in the vast and populous West what any one or many pundits in India say or threaten to say about the *Secret Doctrine*, since we believe that although a great inheritance has been placed before the East Indians by their ancestors they have not seized it, nor have they in these later days given it out to their fellow men living beyond the bounds of India, and since this apathy of theirs, combined with their avowed belief that all Western people, being low-caste men, cannot receive the Sacred Knowledge, has removed these pundits from the field of influence upon Western thought.

And lastly, knowing that the great wheel of time has turned itself once more so that the Powers above see that the hour has come when to all people, East and West alike, shall be given the true knowledge, be it Vedantic or otherwise, we believe that the Masters behind the Theosophical Society and whom you serve, desire that such books as the *Secret Doctrine* should be written.

We therefore earnestly entreat you not to be moved from your original purpose and plain pledge that, before passing away from our earthly sight, you would lay before us the *Secret Doctrine*.

Receive, Madame, the assurances of our high esteem and the pledge of our continued loyalty.

Signed :

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE,	MRS. J. C. GRIFFIN,
J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK,	ALEX. O. DRAGICSEVICS,
SAMUEL HICKS CLAPP,	E. H. SANBORN,
ALEXANDER FULLERTON,	E. M. TOZIER,
EDSON D. HAMMOND,	E. DAY MACPHERSON,
ABNER DOUBLEDAY,	JNO. F. MILLER, M. D.,
GEORGE W. WHEAT,	WILLIAM M. GATES,
JNO. W. LOVELL,	EMILY G. FLEMING,
GEORGE W. SALTER,	E. B. GRAY, JR.,
LYDIA BELL,	HADJII ERINN, for himself and 26 others.

Theosophical Activities.

IN AMERICA.

EPITOME OF THEOSOPHY.—This tract, which appeared in January PATH, has been printed separately as an offering to the cause by a New York Theosophist. It has been well received and widely circulated; the *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, of January 15th, printed it entire.

CINCINNATI T. S. continues active work. In December a paper entitled "Proteus" was read. Some extracts from it will appear in the PATH.

ISHWARA THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, Minneapolis, Minn., has been duly organized. Dr. J. W. D. B. La Pierre is President; James Taylor, Vice-President; and Julia Lovering, Secretary.

ARYAN T. S., N. Y.—The weekly meetings are full of interest and well attended. The subject of Karma has been discussed, and Spiritual Culture taken up for consideration. The Library has increased in size and is much used.

IN INDIA.

HEADQUARTERS LIBRARY.—Over 300 volumes have been added to the Western Section since last December, and several hundred MSS. and printed matter to the Eastern Section.

In December the Admiral of the Chinese fleet while at Columbo received from the Columbo T. S. a copy of Col. Olcott's Buddhist Catechism, and in reply said he would endeavor to have it translated into Chinese for circulation in the Empire. The Buddhist Fancy Bazaar was held at the T. S. Headquarters in Columbo in December.

BOMBAY THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY'S FREE DISPENSARY.—In October, 1887, 886 patients were treated here, Hindus, Parsees, Mussalmans, and others.

PROPOSED CONVENTION IN EUROPE.—The new Vienna T. S. proposes to bring about a convention at Bayrenth during the Wagner Musical Festival in July, 1888. A vegetarian restaurant will be open there during the performances. Any desiring to attend can address Herr Friedrick Eckstein, Wien, V. (Austria) Siebenbrunnengasse, No. 15.

Several friends have generously contributed the means of reprinting the PATH *for April, 1887, and any orders for it can shortly be filled.*

Great is the fruit, great the advantage of earnest contemplation when set around with upright conduct.—*Maha-Parinibbana-Suttanta.*

OM.